

Warning Signs of Distress

There are times when taking additional steps to ensure firearm safety are particularly important.

Take extra precaution when someone in your home is:

- Increasingly isolated or violent
- Has experienced a major life event such as a divorce, illness or loss of a job
- Depressed
- Experiencing an emotional crisis or displaying significant behavioral change
- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol or increasing the use of alcohol or drugs

At a minimum, all firearms should be stored unloaded and locked when not in use. Other storage options may include locked gun safes, cabinets, or storage cases. Temporary off-site storage may be advisable if there are concerns about storing a firearm in the home.

Learn more about how you and your family can be there for a Veteran or Service member in crisis:

bethereforveterans.com

#BeThere



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



SAFE FIREARM STORAGE MATTERS...

because no one can unfire a firearm



Simple actions you can take to keep your family safe

#BeThere



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Owning a firearm is both a right and a responsibility. The power is in your hands to safely handle and store firearms in your home. You should also ensure only authorized family members have access and are educated about firearm safety and responsible storage.

For someone in crisis or a child who does not understand the harm a firearm can cause, a safely stored firearm can mean the difference between a tragic outcome and a life saved.

Though many Veterans are well-versed in firearm safety, all Veterans and their families should understand who is authorized to access firearms and how to properly handle and store firearms in their home.



A 2014 study showed that **firearms** could be found in roughly **31% of households** nationwide.

– General Social Survey, 2014



Firearm injuries were **the second-leading cause** of injury-related deaths nationwide in 2015.

– CDC Report, 2017



Research shows there is a **70% lower risk** of unintentional firearm-related injury and death among youths when guns are **stored safely**.

– Journal of the American Medical Association, 2015

Safe Storage Checklist

Knowing how to properly care for and store your firearm and ammunition can reduce the risk of unintentional firearm deaths.

Take these simple steps to keep your family safe:

- ☐ Make sure firearms cannot be accessed by children and unauthorized adults by keeping firearms locked and unloaded when not in use.
- ☐ Store ammunition separately from firearms and out of reach of children and unauthorized adults.
- ☐ Regularly reassess steps to ensure safe storage and use of firearms, especially during periods of increased stress or emotional crisis.

REQUEST A GUNLOCK
from your local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

Find your local SPC at VeteransCrisisLine.net/ResourceLocator.

